Illustrating Childhood—"Hansel and Gretel"
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RACHEL FREUDENBURG

Illustrating Childhood—"Hansel and Gretel"

A Winged Child and a Sky-blue Goddess

In an essay on "Old Children's Books," Walter Benjamin claims that although much of nineteenth-century children's literature was so pedagogically heavy-handed as to make it boring for children, the illustrations were different. The artist and child, he claims, communicate directly through images, and these illustrations introduce the child to a playful, free space: " . . . even the most old-fashioned and timid works of this period have one saving grace: their illustration. This eluded the control of philanthropic theories and quickly, behind the backs of the pedagogues, children and artists came together."[1] Elsewhere, Benjamin suggests that children, in their own efforts as narrators, were innocent of intentional meaning: "When they think up stories, children are like directors who do not allow themselves to be censored by 'meaning'" ("Aussicht ins Kinderbuch" 47). Although Benjamin himself deplored books which promoted an adult conception of childhood, instead of an accurate understanding of the child's viewpoint, there is every indication that he himself is working with just such an image. Take, for example, the poetic vision concluding the essay "Aussicht ins Kinderbuch": "The poet with the melodic hands camps there, leaning on a sky-blue goddess. A winged child notes down the muse's inspirations. Scattered about lie harp and lute. In the bowels of the mountain, dwarves trumpet and fiddle. But in the sky, the sun is setting. Once Lyser painted such a landscape, and the eyes and cheeks of children bent over books are reflected in its many-colored fire" (54).[2] Benjamin is subscribing to a belief that children do not inhabit the adult world of labor, meaning, and

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morality, but rather are immersed in the universe of nature, play, and fantasy. Yet this notion itself is an adult creation which came into vogue with the Romantic movement and has held sway over our imaginations ever since (Cunningham 1).

This view of children and children's literature long dominated scholarly writing on illustrations for the Grimms' fairy tales: "When they [illustrators] retold the childlike fairy tale with brush and pen, they were satisfying a longing for their own lost childhood. . . . They all dreamed themselves back into the innocence of childhood" (Probst 12). Probst's comment demonstrates the irresistible attraction of the Romantic ideal of childhood, even for scientific writers such as himself. In addition, Probst correctly identifies fairy-tale illustration as a forum which proved itself particularly suitable for the reproduction of this ideal. Even a tale such as "Hansel and Gretel," in which juvenile incarceration, abandonment, and child labor figure prominently, has spawned many an illustration of carefree, innocent children. In fact, the nineteenth-century illustrations for this tale deflect attention away from child abuse and instead concentrate on issues which were more attractive to a contemporaneous readership, among them, the image of the Romantic child. However, much as Benjamin might like to deny it, the Romantic child is woven into a pedagogical agenda containing very specific and even oppressive expectations for children.[3]

Scope of Project

This project focuses primarily on German, nineteenth-century illustrations of "Hansel and Gretel." By limiting myself to this tale, whose protagonists begin as children and remain under parental care at the end, I am able to concentrate on the representation of childhood. But unfortunately, this means that artists who did not illustrate "Hansel and Gretel," such as Johann Peter Lyser, O. Speckter, Paul Meyerheim, and Moritz von Schwind, are excluded. Though not exhaustive, the collection of images reproduced here is hopefully extensive enough to give a thorough understanding of the variety of illustrations produced in this era. Often we entertain a much too homogenous illusion of what childhood is and was. As Cunningham and Bottigheimer have both shown, class, gender, and even confessional differences in a given historical context generate a varying set of images of children (Bottigheimer, "God and the Bourgeoisie" 124; Bottigheimer, "Child-Reader" 53; Cunningham 81–89). Many of the illustrations I discuss are taken from editions of the Grimms' tales, but many appeared in other publications, such as Bechstein's *Deutsches Märchenbuch, Bilderbogen,* rewrites of the tale published individually, and smaller anonymous collections of fairy tales. By looking closely at several images from a variety of sources, we gain a more complete understanding than when we single out the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* alone, and we are able to explore the tension between the dominant image of the Romantic child and forces which resisted or

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even critiqued this image. My aim, then, is not merely to use illustration in order to pinpoint what the nineteenth century meant with its Romantic definition of childhood, but to demonstrate that the concept of "childhood" itself should be thought of as resembling a conversation between this view and many other disharmonious voices. This conversation can take place within a single image and between images. In order to show how the twentieth century carries on this conversation, by both responding to traditions and introducing new concerns, I also discuss a limited number of later illustrations.

Scholarly Work on Fairy-Tale Illustration

Although most people who grew up with the Grimms' fairy tales first experienced them either as films or picture books, surprisingly little research has been done on their illustration. One might even conclude that as adults, we are simply no longer interested in such light fare. Admittedly, the interests of scholars and youngsters have been and continue to be quite different. Older readers tend to gravitate toward mature themes such as structural analysis, global comparison of folktales, mythic readings, and psychosexual interpretation.[4] Even critics who do deal with illustrations approach the topic from a decidedly adult point of view. Thym-Hochrein, herself an illustrator of children's books, attempts to situate artists in various periods of art history. Barth contextualizes Ludwig Grimm's work within the artist's own maturation process and shows how changes in style reflect the struggle to emerge out from under the shadow cast by a domineering older brother. Working in the chauvinistic atmosphere of the Third Reich, German scholars of the 1940s, such as Bang and Probst, sought an *echtes Märchenton*—a genuine fairy-tale tone—which would prove the superiority of German illustrations over the French. Nowadays, commentary on illustrations takes the form of an introduction to a newly reissued edition of fairy tales.[5] Yet here again, the focus is less on children and more on matters of style, editing, and financial profit. The impression arises that professional readers—perhaps defensively—have made every effort to inscribe these tales into a serious discourse of cultural critique, and to remove them from the clutches of children. Although all of these approaches do supply stores of valuable information for the researcher, they fail to ask how illustration has portrayed children. What sorts of images are young readers being encouraged to identify with, and why?

Another obstacle to the study of illustration has been its inherently interdisciplinary quality, for it has fallen outside of traditional boundaries drawn for both literature and art.[6] Bang claims that illustrators were generally bad artists, and that all one really needed to succeed in this field was not talent, but fantasy.[7] This attitude goes far in explaining why the pictures accompanying texts for children have received so little academic attention. After all, how important could this material be if it is not even good art but "merely" an escapist

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fantasy devoid of any real meaning? In addition to this lack of respect from art historians, literary critics have also given illustrators short shrift. Lessing argues that visual art isolated a single moment of narrative and froze time, thus defining illustration as a deficient form of storytelling.[8] However, illustration does have a variety of ways to depict the unfolding of a plot over time (Oesterle 183–84) and perhaps even does some things that narration doesn't. For example, visual representations contain much in the way of physical details that can not be included in the very sparse narrative style that has become mandatory for fairy tales (Arz 216; Thym-Hochrein 300). Literary specialists also study the history of the texts themselves, and to be sure, the actual wording of the tales has undergone significant changes which warrant interpretation. However, for each textual version, there are at least as many illustrations, and numerically speaking, a study of the visual component of fairy tales gives us a broader range of interpretations to work with than the relatively more constant textual variants.

More contemporary scholars realize that "fairy-tale illustrations show certain attitudes toward the tale, and by virtue of this, they comprise an important aspect of fairy-tale reception" (Böhm-Korff 191). Indeed, the illustrations often tell quite a different story than the narrative itself. The work of scholars such as Bottigheimer ("Iconographic Continuity," "Face of Evil," "Eve and the Apple"), Tatar *(Off With Their Heads),* Weinrebe, Brüggemann ("Bild des jungen Lesers"), Schenda, and others looks to illustrations to provide insights into social history. Shifts in iconography over time trace changes in social attitudes which may not be as clearly spelled out in the text itself (Bottigheimer, "Eve and the Apple"), and may even point to issues which are not included in the text at all.

Kinder- und Hausmärchen as Children's Literature

Prior to 1750, little distinction was made between books for "simple" adults and children who could not yet read. Often, the same book was intended for both groups of readers (Brüggemann, *Handbuch* 1: 1–6). But with the Enlightenment, views on childhood changed (Tomlinson 71–73), and during the second half of the eighteenth century, these alterations led to the birth of the children's book. These developments were first felt in society's upper crust and gradually made their way down the social ladder (Bottigheimer, "Child-Reader" 47; Kaminski 14–18). The invention of lithography in 1796–97 made printing illustrations less expensive, and during the 1800s, this new industry expanded quickly (Petri; Dyhrenfurth-Graebsch 143). Finally, by the turn of the twentieth century, children's literature was available to children of all social classes.

Like "children's" literature predating 1750, Grimms' *Märchen* straddle two worlds: that of the adult and the child. However, the adults whom the Grimms were addressing were not merely the "simple" folk, but scholars and researchers as well. In spite of the title they gave their work, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen,* the

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brothers Grimm did not intend their collection specifically or exclusively for children, and Jacob even believed that children did not need a literature of their own (Steig 269). The second edition of 1819 embodies the way in which the collection addresses two very different groups of readers. Apparently written for a learned community, it was heavily annotated and supplied with a third volume, published in 1822, of textual variants and erudite commentary. However, as they explained in the preface, the brothers had "carefully eliminated every phrase not appropriate for children" (trans. in Tatar, *Hard Facts* 217). They also had their younger brother produce two drawings which were included as title plates: one showing the fairy-tale narrator, Frau Viehmann, and the other depicting a scene from "Brüderchen und Schwesterchen."

The first illustrated edition of the tales, that is, the first edition containing pictures throughout the text, was published not in Germany, but in England with the title *German Popular Stories* (1823). This tiny, attractive volume included thirty-one translations of the two hundred tales gathered by Jacob and Wilhelm and many humorous illustrations by George Cruikshank, also famed for his illustrations of Dickens's works. Although "Hansel and Gretel" was translated here, Cruikshank significantly opted not to illustrate it. Since he believed that these stories were completely inappropriate for little ears and eyes (Tatar, *Off with Their Heads* 17), it seems only logical that he would de-emphasize a tale whose primary players are underage.

Throughout the decades there have been many who, like Cruikshank, have found the Grimms' tales too violent, scary, and depraved to be shared with children. Others argue that these folkloric gems introduce children to eternal moral truths; but wherever we stand on this issue, the tales have been extremely popular, and have been sold to children and parents alike through their illustrations. As obvious as it may seem, it must be reiterated that illustrations of "Hansel and Gretel" represent an adult vision of childhood, and not the actual experiences of children. The results of this study are often frightening, not because of the presence of witches, monsters, and death, but because of the images of children being promoted through the illustrations. The alleged eternal truths being conveyed are none other than the pediatric behavioral norms, such as subservience and dependency, insisted upon by nineteenth-century dominant culture.

Ludwig Emil Grimm (1790–1863)

Upon receiving his complimentary copy of the Grimms' collection, Achim von Arnim wrote that he hoped the brothers would soon produce an edition with illustrations: "I would just advise you to do one thing. . . . Have your brother draw a few pages for the tales, the lack of copper plates and the surrounding learnedness exclude it from the realm of children's books and prevent more

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widespread distribution. I wouldn't be surprised if a certain speculator in Leipzig did not extract the most entertaining tales and reprint them with accompanying pictures" (Steig 252). Arnim did not want them to produce a children's book per se, but he realized the potential for financial gain in this newly emerging industry and was also keenly aware of the brothers' dire financial straits.[9] Doubly inspired by Arnim's encouragement and the success of *German Popular Stories,* Wilhelm set about editing a Small Edition of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen.* He selected fifty stories and had his younger brother, Ludwig Emil Grimm, provide illustrations for seven of them.[10] While sales of the more lugubrious and very pricey complete edition had not exactly been stellar, the Small Edition experienced thirty-six printings, in at least ten different editions, between 1825 and 1887 (Gerstner, *Grimms Märchen* 351; Bottigheimer, "Publishing History" 95–96).

Wilhelm was actively involved in all aspects of this book, the illustrations notwithstanding. After seeing Ludwig's first sketch for "Hansel and Gretel," he made a list of several things which he wanted changed, and Ludwig complied.[11] Scholars have noted that Wilhelm's textual revisions of the tales stress themes such as sexual modesty, Christianity, the patriarchal home, sacrifice, compassion, and for women, hard work (Zipes, *Art of Subversion* 50–59; Tatar, *Hard Facts* 7–10, 30, 86). Once we realize how actively involved he was in the orchestration of the illustrations, it should come as no surprise that these same values would be represented visually as well. The result is gloomy (fig. 1). Hansel is imprisoned; Gretel covers her face in sorrow and cries. The figures seem to be crammed uncomfortably into a too shallow plane which echoes Hansel's quarters and allows the siblings no space to move. The setting is ominous: black fir trees form the background, and the witch, deformed and threatening, emerges from her hovel. Bang describes the illustration as showing the interplay of good and evil, the black cat about to pounce upon the white bird, the moon trying to penetrate the dense cloud cover (Bang 36). At best, it presents a vision of sorrow and long-suffering, the passive acceptance of one's fate, not to mention child abuse and female domestic labor, which I shall discuss more fully later.

Ludwig composed another sketch for this tale which is quite different: it is a liberation scene, in which the evil witch has been vanquished and Hansel freed. The recent struggle is indicated by an overturned bucket and broom, the witch is burning in the oven, and rising from the chimney, we see a black remnant of the horrible, fairy-tale experiences, shriveled and harmless. Instead of dark, dense forest, a clearing opens up, giving a sense of more space and freedom, the cage door is flung open, and the children are animated (fig. 2). These earliest illustrations of "Hansel and Gretel" give us two sides of the same story. On the one hand, there is a scene of passive suffering and unjust persecution, and on the other hand, a triumphal tale of self-liberation, and self-assertion. Interestingly,

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the image of self-liberation was not published, and instead, young readers were confronted with a sad look at children's powerlessness.

Twentieth-century critics celebrate "Hansel and Gretel" as a tale of strong children who develop courage, self-trust, and resourcefulness (Tatar, *Off with Their Heads* 209; Bettelheim 161–64; Mallet 99). Certainly it could be this, and twentieth-century illustrators often do depict the tale in this way (Zwerger; Jeffers); but the choice made by the Grimms is more representative of the entire nineteenth century's preference for weak, passive children. In her study of illustrations for "The Goose Girl," Bottigheimer examines a dual visual tradition which revolves around the depiction of female strength/weakness (Bottigheimer, "Iconographic Continuity" 52). In "Hansel and Gretel," we find a similar dual tradition, but one which is quite asymmetrical. While some illustrators do depict a happy end for Hansel and Gretel (Hosemann; Geißler and Venus; Neureuther; Pocci) they do so while downplaying the children's achievements. On the whole, images of demure, helpless children dominate, even when the ending is a happy one. Böhm-Korff (191) identifies the following elements as "pictorial constants" ("Bildkonstanten") which recur throughout the entire history of illustrations for this tale: the witch, her house, children, and trees. During the nineteenth century, the most popular images by far are the confrontation between children and witch in front of the candy house and the siblings alone in the forest. Hermann Vogel's illustration of the forest scene is typical in that it emphasizes Hansel and Gretel's abandonment, their utter helplessness and loss of hope. The children are small, sad, and vulnerable (fig. 3).[12] As I will show, illustrations of the witch's house also stress the children's relative powerlessness. Depictions of these two moments far outnumber illustrations of freedom and a happy end. Thus the iconographic tradition of "Hansel and Gretel" has consistently focused on the weakness of children rather than their strength.

The Romantic Child: Graf Franz von Pocci (1807–76) and Ludwig Richter (1803–84)

One dozen years after the publication of Ludwig Emil Grimm's illustration, some remarkable changes took place in the representation of the tale's characters. In 1838, Graf Franz von Pocci published an individual edition of *Hänsel und Grethel,* in which pictures and text are artfully arranged on each page, often in some sort of illustrated initial. Though surely still geared toward the upper echelons of society, the books themselves were relatively inexpensive and were marketed specifically for children (Bang 49). Pocci, who was also involved in theater and children's stages and was known in Munich as a *Kinderfreund,* idealizes childhood as a time of play. The children are younger than they were in Grimm's illustration, too young and too weak indeed to push a witch into an oven. They are often shown playing or in close harmony with nature, and

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seem not to realize the extent of the danger they are in. Here, the forest is not a threat but a playground, and Hansel swings back and forth on a rope suspended between two trees (fig. 4). Pocci's illustrations lack the pathos and oppression present in Grimm's; instead he focuses on small, happy-go-lucky children frolicking their way through a narrative filled with extraordinary games.[13] This can be understood as the introduction of the iconography of the Romantic child into the illustration of "Hansel and Gretel." While it may at first seem that doleful children (Grimm) are superseded by playful ones (Pocci), the truth is that the central ideas of these two seemingly contradictory pictorial traditions are fused throughout the remainder of the century. Children appear to be well fed, young, happy, and out of harm's way; but simultaneously, they are powerless vis-à-vis adults.

Although Ludwig Richter never illustrated the Grimms' tales, his illustrations do appear in a 1943 *Jubiläumsausgabe* of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen.* Originally, he brought his art to bear on *Ludwig Bechstein's Märchenbuch* (1853), and throughout most of the nineteenth century, this collection was much more popular than the Grimms'.[14] One reason for this is that both Bechstein's and Richter's renditions are less frightening than the Grimms' and generally more palatable for bourgeois audiences. Here, Hansel and Gretel are guided every step of the way by kind birds, and when they return home their mother is still alive. Even the narrative style of Bechstein's text was more refined than Wilhelm Grimm's, whose tales were viewed as belonging to the lower class (Bottigheimer, "Ludwig Bechstein" 64–66). Until the end of the 1800s, bourgeois culture as represented in Bechstein's work attracted more readers than the more brutal folk culture promoted by the brothers Grimm (Ewers 605; Bottigheimer, "Ludwig Bechstein" 57–60; Bottigheimer, "Publishing History" 83–87).

In an illustration for his picture album, *Für's Haus* from 1860, we find Richter's best-known rendition of the "Mährlein von Hänsel und Grethel," which is just as benign as Bechstein's tales. In this scene, which was also incorporated into the 1943 *Jubiläumsausgabe* of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen,* Hansel and Gretel meet the witch for the first time. Richter twice renders this moment in an almost cartoon-like style, indicating that the confrontation is perhaps too unnerving to merit much realistic detail. He was certainly capable of realistic line, but the abstraction distances viewers from the potentially threatening content (fig. 5). As in Pocci's illustrations, Hansel and Gretel are young, under five years of age, and both are so plump that the reality of starvation is surely quite distant. Although the witch sports the wizened face, oversized nose, protruding chin, hood, and hunched back which mark her as evil (Bottigheimer, "Face of Evil" 329–30), the children are not in real danger. In the short fence encircling the area in front of the house, we sense the hint of entrapment, but the fence opens up wide toward the reader and invites us in more than it encircles the children.

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Fig. 1. Ludwig Emil Grimm, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" from *Kinder- und Hausmärchen: Kleine Ausgabe* (1825); rpt. in Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1912), following p. 96. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 2. Ludwig Emil Grimm, drawing of "Hänsel and Gretel" from *Ludwig Emil Grimm* 223. Copyright © 1985 by Brüder-Grimm-Gesellschaft e.V. (Kassel) Germany. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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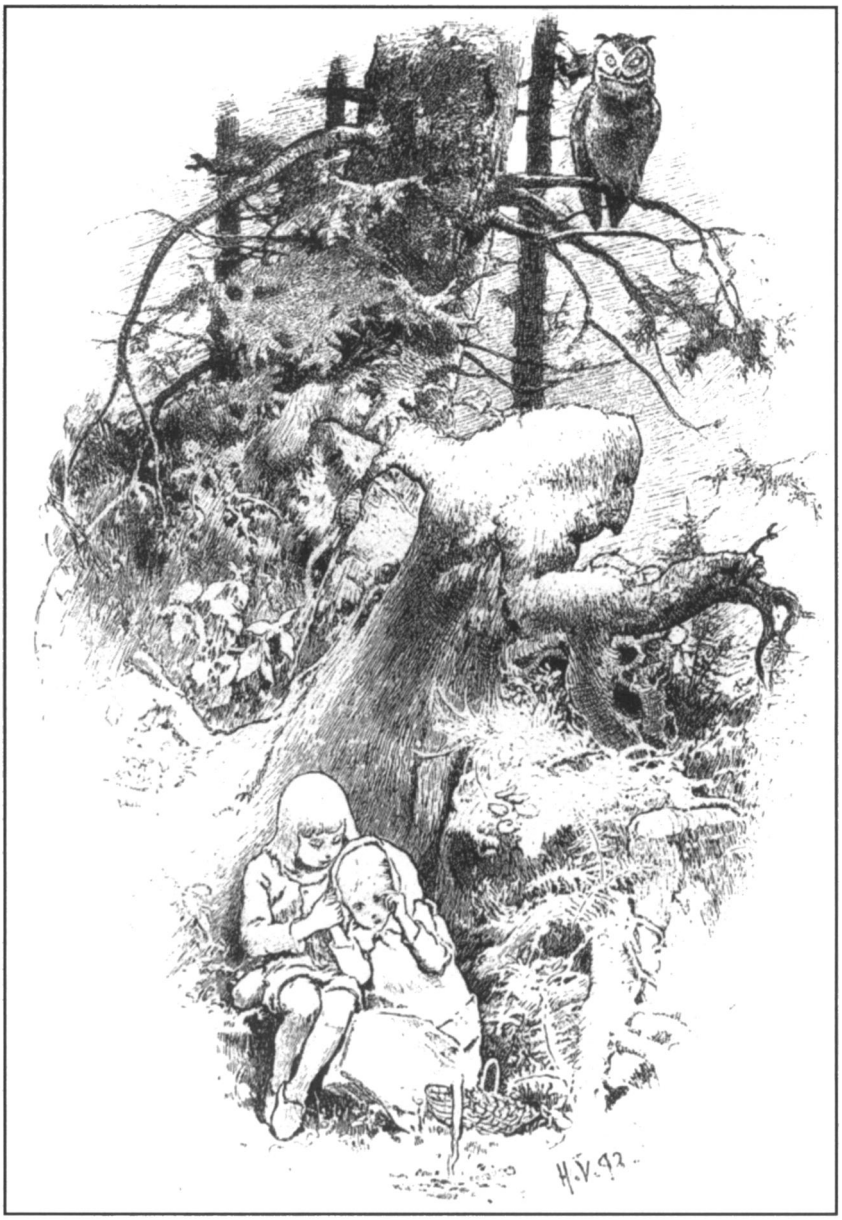

Fig. 3. Hermann Vogel, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" from *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1894) 71. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 4. Graf Franz von Pocci, illustration from *Hänsel und Grethel* (1838); rpt. in Pocci, *Die gesamte Druckgraphik* 55. Copyright © 1974 by Rogner & Bernhard GmbH & Co. Verlag KG, Hamburg. Courtesy of the Fine Arts Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 5. Ludwig Richter, "Mährlein von Hänsel und Grethel" from *Für's Haus* (1860) n.p. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

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Fig. 6. Graf Franz von Pocci, illustration from *Hänsel und Grethel* (1838); rpt. in Pocci, *Die gesamte Druckgraphik* 58. Copyright © 1974 by Rogner & Bernhard GmbH & Co. Verlag KG, Hamburg. Courtesy of the Fine Arts Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 7. Ludwig Richter, illustration for "Hänsel und Grethel" from Ludwig Bechstein, *Ludwig Bechstein's Märchenbuch* (1853) 45. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

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Fig. 8. Carl Wilhelm Schurig, illustration for "Hensel und Grethel" (1846) from Ludwig Bechstein, *Deutsches Märchenbuch* 95. Copyright © 1996 by Philipp Reclam jun. Verlag GmbH.

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Fig. 9. C. Offterdinger, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" from *Märchenschatz* (n.d.) n.p. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 10. Ludwig Pietsch, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" from *Kinder- und Hausmärchen: Kleine Ausgabe von 1858* 81. Reproduced with permission of Insel Verlag. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 11. Theodor Hosemann, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel," *Deutsche Bilderbogen,* no. 53 (Stuttgart, 1867–70); rpt. in *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1949) 119. Reproduced with permission of AKG London.

Fig. 12. Theodor Hosemann, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel," *Deutsche Bilderbogen,* no. 53 (Stuttgart, 1867–70); rpt. in *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1949) 125. Reproduced with permission of AKG London.

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Fig. 13. Walter Crane, illustration for "Hansel and Grethel" from *Household Stories* (1883) 85. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

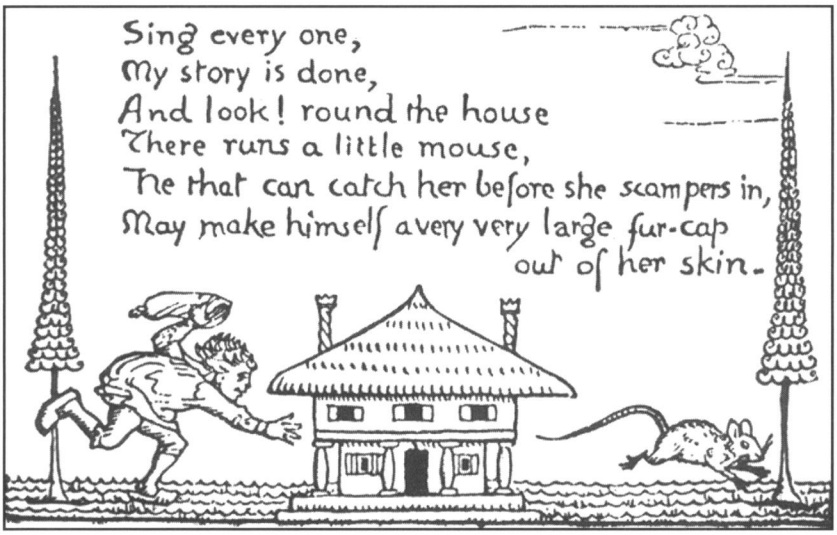
Sing every one,
My story is done,
And look! round the house
There runs a little mouse,
He that can catch her before she scampers in,
May make himself a very very large fur-cap
out of her skin.

Fig. 14. Walter Crane, illustration for "Hansel and Grethel" from *Household Stories* (1883) 92. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 15. Rudolf Geißler and Leopold Venus, illustration for "Hänsel und Grethel" from *Märchenbuch* (1878) 54. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 16. Paul Hey, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" (1912–14); rpt. in *Grimms Märchen* (1989) 86. Copyright © 1989 by K. Thienemanns Publishing House, Stuttgart-Wien-Bern.

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Fig. 17. Christian Ernst Stölzle, illustration from *Hansel und Grethel, Münchener Bilderbogen,* no. 31 (1850). Courtesy of the Fine Arts Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 18. Eugen Neureuther, illustration for "Hänsel und Grethel" from *Der Wunderborn* (1882), facing p. 162. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

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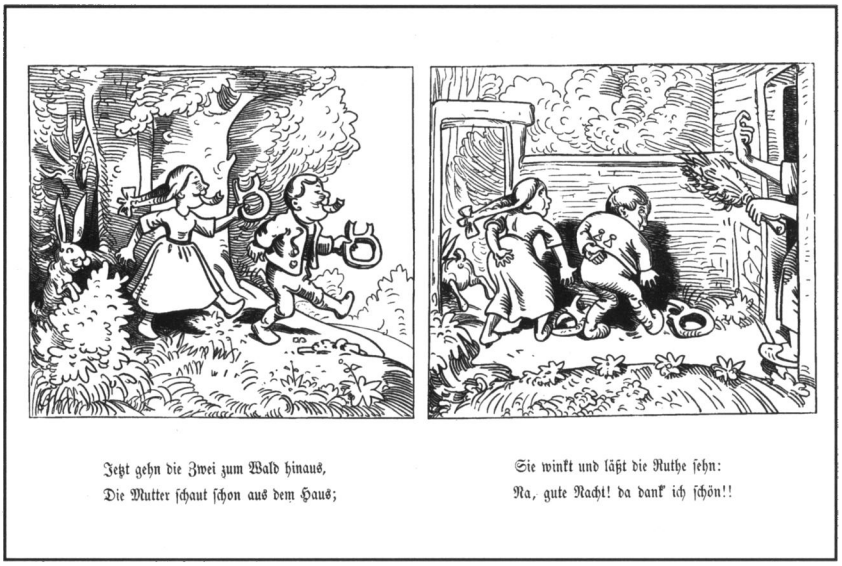
Jetzt gehn die Zwei zum Wald hinaus,
Die Mutter ſchaut ſchon aus dem Haus;
Sie winkt und läßt die Ruthe ſehn:
Na, gute Nacht! da dank' ich ſchön!!

Fig. 19. Wilhelm Busch, illustration from *Hänsel und Gretel, eine Bilderposse* (1864) n.p. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

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Fig. 20. Hermann Vogel, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" from *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1894) 75. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 21. Otto Ubbelohde, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" from *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1907) 1: 91. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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Fig. 22. Otto Ubbelohde, illustration for "Hänsel und Gretel" from *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1907) 1: 86. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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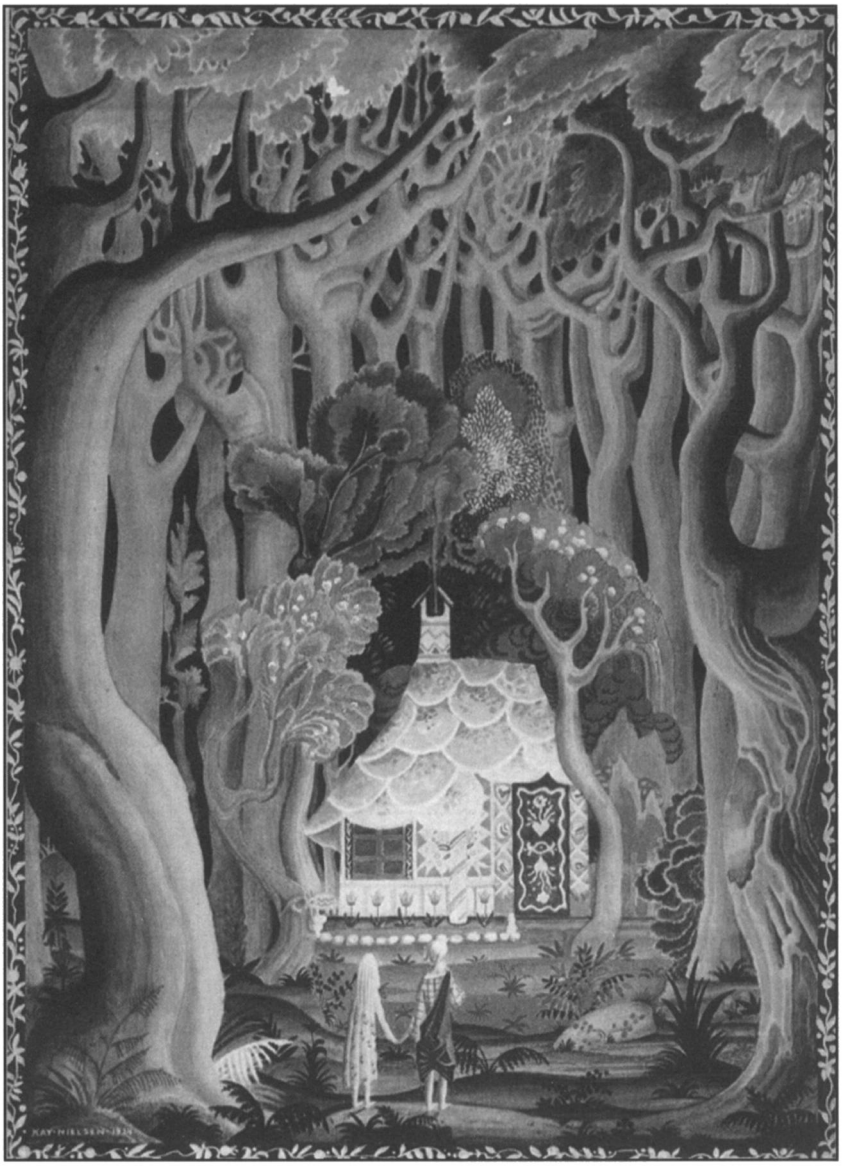

Fig. 23. Kay Nielsen, illustration for "Hansel and Gretel" from *Hansel and Gretel and Other Stories by the Brothers Grimm* (1925), facing p. 8. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

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"Early tomorrow morning we'll take the children
out into the thickest part of the wood. There we
shall light a fire for them, give them each a piece

Fig. 24. Susanne Suba, illustration for "Hansel and Gretel" from p. 52 of *Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Germany* by Virginia Haviland. Copyright © 1959 by Virginia Haviland. Illustration copyright © 1959 by Susanne Suba. By permission of Little, Brown and Company.

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Fig. 25. Anthony Browne, illustration from *Hansel and Gretel* (1981) n.p. Illustration from *Hansel and Gretel* Copyright © 1991 by Anthony Browne. Reproduced by permission of the publisher Walker Books Ltd, London.

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Fig. 26. Illustration for "Hansel and Gretel" from *Little Snow-White and Other Fairy Stories* (n.d.) 41. Courtesy of Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

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The house itself is decorated with birds—reminding us that Hansel and Gretel's helpers are never far away—and below the scene at the witch's house, a tableau of four rather primitively sketched images depicts the entire story: the family trudging through the woods, Hansel encaged, Gretel riding on the back of a swan across the water, and finally, the return home. One reason for the inclusion of this tableau is that *Für's Haus,* where the illustration appeared, was simply a collection of pictures without accompanying text. Thus these smaller images remind viewers of those narrative episodes not included in the larger portion of the illustration. But the tableau's effect is more significant, for it assures us that although Hansel and Gretel may be afraid now, they will soon be reunited with their parents. "Hansel and Gretel" is a tale of child abandonment, neglect, and attempted infanticide; and because child abuse has been a constant throughout human history, there is absolutely no reason to believe that it is based on anything other than fact (Rett; Tatar, *Hard Facts* 49). However, in these illustrations by Pocci and Richter, adult complicity in the tribulations of Hansel and Gretel seems to disappear because there is no real threat. Pocci's depiction of mother and children, in which Hansel and Gretel chat and skip along while holding hands with their mother, is an almost heartwarming scene (fig. 6), and Richter's rendition of the family walking into the woods, though not at all playful, indicates little if any intergenerational aggression (fig. 7). As we saw with Richter's illustration of the scene at the candy house, even the evil witch poses no real threat. Again, for both Richter and Pocci, children are not in any real danger in their relationship with adults. Furthermore, the image of the young, helpless child inscribes adults into the family as benevolent guardians of childhood and renders them blameless for Hansel and Gretel's trials and tribulations. To what extent, one might ask, is the Romantic image of the child *the* fantasy which allows adults to repress their own involvement in juvenile suffering? What social forces contributed to the popularity of such an image? Zipes suggests that Wilhelm's editorial work on "Hansel and Gretel" served as a "rationalization of abandonment" (*Happily Ever After* 46). On one level, this is true for the illustrations as well, but on another level, these pictures are oddly disinterested in the entire issue of abandonment, and the reasons for the elision of any hint of child abuse must be sought in the social context where these images were consumed.

As Zipes explains, fairy tales were *written down* in the nineteenth century for bourgeois audiences, that is, for families who had both the wealth and the education to buy and read them. In the transcription and publication process, they were cleaned up and rewritten to incorporate upper-middle-class values (Zipes, *Art of Subversion* 54–55). Additionally, the poorer population had little or no access to illustrated texts until approximately 1850 (Schenda 103); thus for the time period in which the first illustrations for "Hansel and

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Gretel" were produced, and in which the iconographic tradition for this tale was established, illustrated books were possessions of the wealthy. For the bourgeoisie, childhood and adulthood were opposites, with childhood being reserved as a time for play, nature, freedom, and adulthood being burdened by work, life in towns, and responsibility (Cunningham 159–60). If these books were to appeal to affluent adult buyers and generate profits, they needed to cater to parents' opinions regarding the charms of childhood and the guiltlessness of adulthood. As Hearne explains, illustrations accelerate the sanitization process and help to deflect the reader's attention away from troubling narrative content. In the 1970s, illustrators softened the Grimms' stories and removed the last traces of violence and death in order to earn more money (Hearne 226–27). It would be a surprise if these concerns were not a force to be reckoned with in the previous century as well.

Yet another factor contributing to the relative harmlessness of the nineteenth-century editions of *Märchen* can be found in very real social divisions within the German population. While child labor and abandonment were strong presences in nineteenth-century Europe, they were less of an issue for well-to-do children who were brought up within the shelter of a stable middle-class home. The innocence and playfulness of illustrations by Richter and Pocci exhibit perhaps a willful ignorance of child abuse practices which were common in the larger society. However, the divide between young and old was more pronounced among the well-to-do. Since children of the upper classes could no longer relate to the facts of the tales, they related them to their own existence through a process of psychological displacement. Their responses emphasized the "social weakness, intellectual or physical inferiority" of the young (Bastian 42–43). Certainly the age and size disparity in Richter's work also emphasizes, and even exaggerates, the power asymmetry operative in the adult-child relationship. While it seems to present merely a nostalgic image of innocent bliss, the Romantic version of childhood also insists upon an impenetrable border between the generations, a border which actually insulates children from autonomy, responsibility, and personal strength. This weakness can be endearing, or it can be misused by the stronger generation. The fearful and subordinate stance of the children in so many illustrations shows that the benign and loving Biedermeier family has a darker side in which the child-parent relationship is characterized by fear and intimidation. In this way, the illustrations show contradictory attitudes toward children—loving and protective versus angry and disciplinary.

Discipline

Tatar exposes a widespread nineteenth-century belief in children as objects in need of taming; their will must be broken and, like Struwwelpeter, who is

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incurably ill-mannered, they must be scared into submission (*Off with Their Heads* 39). Literature for children was incorporated into a pedagogy of fear which had great reach. For example, the Grimms' tales were adopted into the German school curriculum as a means of teaching children that they must obey their parents (Bastian 52–53). The innocent, angelic child is perhaps not a naturally occurring phenomenon, as Romantic iconography suggests, but the product of a strict education and sheltered upbringing. S/He has an evil shadow that is both rambunctious and naughty and that must be suppressed through proper education so that only the good child is seen. Yet like object and shadow, these two go everywhere together. Though a first glance at the illustrations for "Hansel and Gretel" reveals only the positive of this pair—the innocent, playful child—deeper analysis of the many pictures available exposes its negative—the child in need of discipline.

The image of intimidated children appeals to illustrators throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. The majority of nineteenth-century illustrators show the moment in which Hansel and Gretel are confronted by the witch, and in all but a few of these illustrations, the children are visibly frightened. As in Richter's drawing, many of the children embrace one another as if seeking protection from the witch (see fig. 5). Although the text describes the children as startled, illustrators have not typically felt bound by the written word, nor is it self-evident that the children should be frightened at this point in the story. They have been wandering about in the forest for three days and could conceivably be happy to encounter another person. In fact, Suba's Hansel and Gretel, drawn in 1959, smile broadly as the witch emerges from her house; but for nineteenth-century readers, fear and trembling are more plausible responses. In Schurig's illustration, which predates Richter's by eight years, and which was included in the first illustrated edition of Bechstein's *Deutsches Märchenbuch,* we see a configuration of characters which is repeated in many subsequent illustrations (fig. 8).[15] The witch, framed by the front door of her house, approaches the children from the left, while Hansel and Gretel recoil in fear. In another variant, represented by Arthur Rackham, the children are so startled that they drop their cake and gaze in astonishment at the enormous old woman (see Rackham 259). Here, Hansel and Gretel are not only afraid, they are spatially dominated by the witch's imposing figure: she stands on a step above them and they are much smaller than she. Rackham's illustration, from an early twentieth-century English publication, demonstrates that this trend extended far beyond the borders of nineteenth-century Germany.[16]

Gluttony

Illustrations of confrontation between the witch and children in front of the house of cake are so numerous that the image has gained iconic stature. A

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print based on an 1872 water color by C. Offterdinger, enlightens yet another dimension of this fateful meeting (fig. 9). The complicated history of this image typifies an era in which copyright law was as yet underdeveloped, and also points up some typical nineteenth-century printing practices. An illustrator would not actually engrave a plate or block used for production: technicians performed this work. In this instance, the technician has become something more than a mere copyist and has produced a mirror image of Offterdinger's original while obviously preserving many motifs from it, such as the small size of the children in relation to the witch, or the gestures with which the two plump babes recoil in fear. In this very standard configuration, the scene of eating becomes infected with a note of prohibition, and the witch even looks as if she would snatch a bit of cake from Hansel's hand, harshly reinforcing the belief that children should not succumb to their desire to devour sugars. Yet another illustration, this one by Vogel, expresses the same sentiment by actually including a serpent in the lower left-hand corner of the scene at the witch's house, as a "hint by the artist that this is a story of temptation" (Tatar, *Off with Their Heads* xix; the illustration is also reproduced in Tatar's book).

Such a message contradicts the limited idea of childhood as a time of plenty, play, and marzipan, and it also contradicts the alleged origins of the tale. We imagine that "Hansel and Gretel" began as a tale of inflationary prices and hunger, and in such an environment, there certainly would not be a prohibition on eating. On the contrary, one would dream of unlimited gluttony, a house of cake. However, in a social setting characterized by abundance, such as the *Bürgertum* of the nineteenth century, attitudes toward food change. A comment by Wilhelm Grimm in a letter to Achim von Arnim tells us exactly what was on the minds of parental readers: "I could imagine a mother with a sweet-toothed child, when the subject is a sugar house, or sugared milk and similar things, might she have reason to withhold the book? Whoever is not sure can make selections and read them aloud."[17] It should be added that even today, the overconsumption of sugar and child nutrition are by no means trivial issues for parents, childcare providers, pediatricians, educators, or even legislators. In Ludwig Pietsch's illustration (fig. 10), Hansel is about to break off a huge piece of cake/roof and devour it when the witch appears and glares menacingly at the children. Gretel is so startled she rushes to her big brother's side. The very simple message being conveyed here is that children must be taught not to eat too much sugar. Pocci sharpens this didacticism by rewriting the tale as "Die traurige Geschichte von Hansl und Gretl," in which two children wander off into the woods, eat poisonous berries, and die. This is no longer a story of starvation and attempted cannibalism. Through illustrations and other adaptations, the tale transforms itself over and over again into a vehicle for messages regarding nutrition.

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Supporting the Patriarchy

Diet is clearly not the only pedagogical concern of nineteenth-century illustrators, for themes supporting the patriarchal order are also amply represented. In fact, Zipes proves that Wilhelm's editorial changes served to rewrite "Hansel and Gretel" into a tale which praised the patriarchal order, not only the good father, but also the saving grace of God the father (*Happily Ever After* 52). The misogyny of the Grimms' tales is well documented (see especially Bottigheimer, *Bad Girls*), but nowhere is it made more abundantly clear than in the illustrations of Theodor Hosemann (1807–75) from the late 1860s. These images were originally published in the broadside *Deutsche Bilderbogen,* but have subsequently been incorporated into numerous fairy-tale books including a currently available edition of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen.* Hosemann's Realist style lends the entire interpretation a less fantastic, more somber tone, and his pictures of the tale's plausible episodes, such as Hansel and Gretel's initial return home, are more successful than the fantastic scenes (fig. 11). The children had scattered pebbles on the path and after the moon illuminated the stones, they followed the trail back home. When they arrive, they are greeted by a dour stepmother, who bars their entry into the domestic space. Compare this to their joyous reunion with their father, who welcomes them with open arms into the kitchen, the heart of the home (fig. 12). The paternal abode, unlike the witch's living space, which seems to blend inside and outside, is orderly, neat, geometric, completely enclosed, and controlled—a comfort for those who have returned from an encounter with unrestrained aggression located in the natural/female realm. Not just editors, but illustrators too, participated in the misogynistic advocacy of the patriarchy.[18]

As Hosemann's illustrations show, comfort is to be found in male space that has been walled off from nature. The association of the feminine with the natural is repeated frequently in other illustrations. Although the text specifically indicates that Hansel was the first to ride across the river at the tale's end, in the illustrations, more often than not, Gretel appears on the duck looking back at her brother still standing on the riverbank. The works of Walter Crane and E. H. Wehnert, for example, present the girl in nature—an ideal which elides Gretel's wits, physical strength, and organizational skills. Instead of highlighting female ingenuity, Crane places Gretel on the duck's back (fig. 13) and illustrates the coda, which in the original German reads, "Mein Märchen ist aus, dort läuft eine Maus, wer sie fängt, darf sich eine große, große Pelzkappe daraus machen" (fig. 14). Here, a boy runs from left to right chasing a mouse. The background is composed of a tidy, symmetrical house framed by identical, triangular trees. The image stresses not only industry and ridding the house of pests, but also the order of the domestic realm which is kept intact by the male sibling.

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Although Gretel is the one who eventually frees them both, Hansel is nearly always larger in size, and often even shown in a protective pose toward his younger sister (Pietsch; Richter; Offterdinger; Vogeler [in Bang, pt. 2, 64]; Stölzle; Schurig; Pocci; Ubbelohde). This size discrepancy is also not based in the text. To be sure, Gretel is referred to as "Schwesterchen" (little sister), but Hansel is also named with the diminutive "Brüderchen" (little brother), albeit not as frequently. For children, age and size are of the utmost importance. Imagine what it means to youngsters to hear about a girl performing an act of heroism, but to look at a girl who is smaller than her male counterpart and in need of protection from him. The effect of the picture is to nullify, or at the very least call into question, the feminine strength suggested by the narrative. In fact, the portrayal of the witch's death scene often shows a very passive Gretel. In the illustration by Geißler and Venus accompanying the 1878 rewrite by A. Linz-Godin (fig. 15), Gretel appears quite serene, even classical as she leans against the oven door. Although we see the witch's shoes and the remnants of her dress peeking out from the fiery furnace, the scene itself is surprisingly nonconflictual. Its composition is ordered and quiet, and a little bird perched on a twig sings to Gretel, who gazes pensively into space. Is this the same creature who, in Linz-Godin's rewrite, inspired Gretel to finish off her tormentor? In this view, children, and especially female children, are not endowed with physical force.

There is one scene, though, in which Gretel typically takes center stage and is often even larger than her brother, namely, when she is working in the kitchen for the witch (see fig. 1). Sometimes, an illustrator who shows Hansel to be larger in other scenes reverses the sizes for this one, which is more than simply an inconsistency or an error. On the contrary, while the physical strength and resourcefulness of girls is de-emphasized, their value as domestic laborers is stressed and put into a positive light. In Vogel's illustration (see fig. 20), Gretel, though still very young, looks slightly older than in an earlier image and is really quite pretty. In another illustration by Hey from 1912–14, Gretel, who is clearly older than Hansel, is hard at work and also very attractive (fig. 16). As we can see, the illustrations, too, reinforce a family order which keeps women and girls in a mothering role toward men, preventing the genders from approaching each other on an equal footing.[19]

Exceptions and Subversions

The Romantic ideal of childhood proposed that children as a group deserved a carefree childhood, yet in actuality, this privilege was reserved for a certain subgroup of children who belonged neither to the lower economic class nor to the female gender. The Romantic image of childhood playfulness and innocence seems at best only one part of the story, at worst, an illusion which veils the

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illustrations' didactic intent and covers the text's disturbing moments. Indeed, the more closely we study these illustrations, the more apparent it becomes that this was not the only perspective to be brought to life through pen and ink. These variations can be attributed to differences in class, but also in the changing beliefs regarding childhood itself. In the following examples, I explore the work of illustrators whose work is closely associated with the perspective of a specific class (Stölzle; Neureuther; Busch), but I also chart the emergence of a child's perspective which is shown to be distinct from, and even opposed to, that of adults (Busch; Vogel; Ubbelohde). Only at the beginning of the twentieth century do we find an appreciation of juvenile suffering and the trauma of child abuse.

Christian Ernst Stölzle (1792–1837)

Illustrations found in collections of books were purchased by families without financial worries, and consequently, they represent the views of the bourgeoisie. A second *Bilderbogen* version of "Hansel and Gretel," which was illustrated by Stölzle and published in 1850, offers a contrasting view from the lower classes.[20] Even at the time of Stölzle's drawing, *Bilderbogen* were looked down upon as crass and unrefined, as entertainment for the lower ranks of the literate (Fleiß 6; Held). The *Bilderbogen* of the nineteenth century were relatively inexpensive, large sheets of paper, printed on one side with pictures and usually some text. They were marketed for the children of poorer families, and since they were intended to be both entertaining and instructive, they often dealt with themes of interest to children, such as animals, occupations, seasons, and even fairy tales. Because artists had only one page to work with, the tales typically had to be shortened or adapted to fit into the available space, and generally, the ratio of picture to text was higher in the *Bilderbogen* than in books containing a collection of stories. In Stölzle's version (fig. 17), the plot has undergone significant changes: the children are not expelled from their home by heartless parents, but simply lose their way in the woods; there is no mention whatsoever of candy, much less an entire house of sweets. Gretel is cleared of any possible wrongdoing, for she adamantly refuses to participate in the scheme to boil her brother and never pushes the witch into the oven. Instead, the evil hag's hair catches on fire as she shows Gretel how to test the bread in the oven for doneness. These narrative changes demonstrate the tendency of the *Bilderbogen* to reduce the moral question posed by fairy tales to a black and white judgment (Koch and Vietze 163). Evil is on the side of the witch while the children and their poor parents remain blameless. Stölzle's work also differs visually from the patterns we have been analyzing. The witch, instead of being imagined as a little old lady dressed in peasants' garb and suffering from osteoporosis, appears to be physically strong; her arms display almost masculine musculature; her face exhibits the commanding features of a ruler. She has more wealth and access to

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information than the children, too, for she is shown with books, a special hat, and a special place at the window for reading.[21] This odd picture may be an extension of a theme we have already encountered in other illustrations, namely, the visual manifestation of adult power over children; however, I suspect that there is more at stake here. This particular visualization should not be read as an allegory for the bourgeois family, but as a comment on social divisions in nineteenth-century German society. While the children are clearly members of an underclass, the witch, with her special attire, possessions, and knowledge, belongs to a more privileged group.

There were, in fact, two very different and competing notions of childhood circulating in Germany during the nineteenth century, one for the upper classes (the Romantic child we have been studying thus far) and one for the poor, whose children were destined to work, and who were denied a childhood in the Romantic sense (Maynes and Taylor 306). Child labor was not only common, but even necessary to the profitability of many early industrialized companies. Typically, families which were unable to support their children would have to commit them into the care of the state, and since these were lower class children, "the state" felt that they should begin to learn skills which they would need later in life; in other words, they should begin to work. Children would be made available to factories on a slave labor arrangement and received no compensation other than food and shelter (Cunningham 138–45). Interestingly, this is precisely what the witch in "Hansel and Gretel" is able to offer the children, but for these two characters, the free food becomes the threat of being eaten alive and the shelter is transformed into a prison. Indeed, this is surely how child labor arrangements must have been perceived by families who were torn apart by the economic exigencies of their day. In our *Bilderbogen* tale, the parents (the lower classes) remain innocent, they contribute in no way to the suffering of their offspring. Instead, it is the witch (the rich?) who is to blame.

This rendition of the fairy tale recovers some of the social criticism which was lost in the sanitization process. It rewrites the tale from the perspective of the less advantaged.[22] In fact, pedagogues of the late nineteenth century were quite aware of this subversive potential, for some of them even recommended sheltering children of the poor from *Märchen*. Familiarizing them with the fantasy-world of the tales and their utopian endings would only encourage them to imagine things for themselves which could never come true. Instead, it must be made clear to them from the start that it was their lot in life to work and not to taste of the house of sweets, "Leckerbissen" (Bastian 55). Stölzle's Hansel and Gretel seem to know this already, for they have no appetite for candy, simply a desire to be freed from persecution.

While these images support a radically political interpretation of "Hansel and Gretel," they also feature the cute chubby, young children we have become

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familiar with from illustrators such as Richter. While Stölzle expresses the perspective of the underprivileged, he also shows their aspirations. As the nineteenth century progressed, the Romantic version of childhood, which had originally been reserved for wealthy children alone, gained popularity among the proletarian classes as well. As a way of expressing their desire for upward mobility, the less well-to-do began adopting the ethics and ideals of their social superiors (Cunningham 138–45; Zipes, *Art of Subversion* 54–55). Interestingly, the *Münchener Bilderbogen* were produced for that very group, the upwardly mobile lower and lower-middle classes, people who, by virtue of their education, had a passport to the dominant class, but did not quite have enough money to fully live out the dream. Their contradictory views, sandwiched as they are between fears of poverty and aspirations for prosperity, seem to find perfect expression in Stölzle's work.

Eugen Neureuther (1806–82)

Der Wunderborn, edited by Karl Seifart and published in 1882, is an example of the *Prachtausgaben,* or luxury books, which were produced during the *Gründerzeit* and were marketed to society's wealthiest families (Rehrl 63, 94–95). This volume features page upon page of beautiful, detailed illustrations by Neureuther, who uses the arabesque form of Romanticism to combine various scenes of a tale into a single tableau (fig. 18). In addition to the confrontation at the witch's house, he also includes the father's house, the forest, the cauldron, Hansel in the cage, Gretel carrying water, Gretel shoving the witch into the oven, Hansel being freed, and the children being transported across the water on the back of a duck, all on one page. These diverse moments are woven together with tendrils, columns, fruits, animals, dwarves, insects, and other decorative motifs. Decoration is, in fact, a key issue for this entire volume. Much larger in size than other, earlier collections, it has the look and weight of a contemporary coffee table book. On its pages, children serve a primarily decorative function, as overfed putti prance and fly in and out of fanciful castles, grottoes, and mountainscapes. Neureuther's emphasis on decoration has a marked effect on the message of the tale as well. Because it is intricately adorned, for example, the witch's house appears to be better appointed than the huts which dot other drawings. Instead of huddling together in fear of the witch, the children are arranged symmetrically on either side of her, with Hansel standing and Gretel seated. They are a bit older than most of their nineteenth-century namesakes, and also a bit more animated; nor do they recoil in fear, but are rather curious and move with the grace of dancers. This choreographed quality separates these figures from the frozen children other artists produced, and it is this same quality which directs the reader's attention toward pleasure and entertainment while cloaking—under the veil of sheer artistry—the tale's troubling aspects.

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Although Gretel raises her hand in protest, any resistance the children stage is all part of the dance and cannot break out of the aesthetic program of the illustration. Since Gretel is merely acting out a role here, she is no longer a victim, but an artist in her own right; childhood suffering no longer seems real, yet the heavily ornamented representation of suffering attracts us. Whatever may be disturbing is harmonized into beauty. On the witch's house sits a row of skulls, artifacts of the children's precarious situation, but they do not threaten. Instead, they adorn and add to the delight of the viewer, who enjoys searching for and discovering macabre details. This picture and the entire package which contains it indicate the upper class's desire to present itself as the standard-bearer of culture and leisurely pleasures.

Wilhelm Busch (1832–1908)

Busch rewrote "Hansel and Gretel" to such an extent that it can no longer be considered the Grimms' tale, much less Bechstein's. The witch is replaced by a couple who have lured the children into their clutches using a trap. Hansel, rather than Gretel, pushes the witch not into the oven, but into a cauldron. Hansel and Gretel work together to lock the male head of household in a cage (originally meant for the children) and to sink him in a swamp. The children are brash, resourceful, and joyous as they outwit the adults who intend to eat them, but their homecoming promises no liberation whatsoever. Instead, they are shown the stick as they approach their mother (fig. 19). Clearly, Busch was a proponent of the literature of corporal punishment, a genre designed to scare children into doing what they should. But his work also subverts the genre by showing the inefficacy of beatings. He demonstrates that this type of literature often doubles back upon itself and becomes slapstick comedy rather than an extension of punitive measures so often employed by adults. The children dread the beating that awaits them, but in fact, they have just escaped a far worse fate in the forest, so how bad could this be? There is no difference any more between the home of the "good" and "evil" parents. It is all the same violent world in which children are at the mercy of ridiculous adults who are unable to wield power justly or effectively. Given the climate of enforced innocence and parental superciliousness which abounds in so many other illustrations, it is easy to see how children enjoyed Busch's work as a breath of fresh air.

Hermann Vogel (1854–1921)

As we have seen, the dividing line between children's literature and literature for adults has always been blurred, and historically, illustrations have, to some extent, appealed to young and old alike. Vogel's work is interesting because it addresses each of these readers, the child and the adult, in a different way. He replicates the standard composition of the scene inside the witch's house, in

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which Hansel is imprisoned and Gretel must carry water, but he does so in a style which suggests an ironic distance from this tradition (fig. 20). The iconographic signs of the witch's true evil nature are everywhere: she is a hunchbacked, long-nosed crone accompanied by a black cat and a black raven. The cauldron, the large butcher knife she wields, and the many carcasses dangling from the ceiling all point to her carnivorous desires toward the children. Yet Vogel seems to be amused by the scene: the witch's features are so exaggerated as to appear comical, and the beasts, whether alive or dead, grin weirdly from ear to ear. Is the artist poking fun at the iconography of the scene? If so, his irony is only for the benefit of the older members of his audience. Adults may find the illustration humorous and even reminiscent of early animated cartoons, but it is doubtful that children would be able to appreciate the joke or to see anything other than the danger that the protagonists are in. For children, the fact that a character is unrealistic or even fantastic makes it no less real; children are genuinely frightened by bizarre monsters, alligators under beds, and cannibalistic witches. Gretel, the only figure who is rendered somewhat realistically in this illustration, reflects the other perspective inscribed in the illustration. She finds herself in a grotesque and dangerous situation. Her worried expression, combined with an attractive, full face framed by long, blond hair, draws the child-reader's sympathy to the girl, who clearly does not experience her predicament as in any way ironic or humorous. Interpreted in this way, Vogel's work appears as a nasty joke between adults at children's expense.

Otto Ubbelohde (1867–1922)

Ubbelohde, who created nearly five hundred drawings for the 1907–09 *Jubiläumsausgabe* of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen,* departs sharply from tradition by choosing not to illustrate the witch at all. Instead, the reader is confronted with a very threatening house, which in its gaping emptiness seems an eerie echo of the children's own abandonment. Hansel and Gretel appear as an aged couple, and it seems that imagining them to be older lends their suffering an air of gravity that was lacking in earlier depictions (fig. 21). While this may be seen as evading the most dramatic moment in the tale, the result is quite different. Ubbelohde's family scene depicts the impenetrable border between children and parents as a knot of foxglove, roots, a hill, animals, and who knows what else (fig. 22). In its beautiful use of line and creation of surface, this picture shows its indebtedness to the *Jugendstil* movement, but its theme is anything but superficial. The children and adults obviously have completely different concerns, since Hansel and Gretel look in one direction while their mother and father look in another. It even appears as if Hansel and Gretel would take a different path altogether. The parent-child relationship is obviously a troubled one, and although Ubbelohde skirts issues of witches and torture

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entirely, he does point his pen at the real source of Hansel and Gretel's suffering: their parents. In Richter's rendition of the same event, on which Ubbelohde's is obviously based, the mother is also carrying a basket on her back; the father, an ax in the crook of his arm; and Hansel scatters bread crumbs. However, Richter does not indicate any distance between children and adults and instead shows a family together, strolling down a lane. Ubbelohde's reinterpretation of Richter cuts through the illusion of harmony, highlights anger and discord, and challenges the notion that adults are, by nature, the benevolent guardians of childhood.

A View to the Twentieth Century

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Freud founded a science which would fundamentally change the way in which children are understood, and which would alter our views on literature and art. Beginning with Ubbelohde, landscapes and scenes in illustrations for Hansel and Gretel start to express the complexity of children's psychological anguish. For example, in Kay Nielsen's depiction of the scene in which Hansel and Gretel discover the cottage made of bread and cakes, two tiny, thin, pale children stand hand in hand, motionless, facing the house but with their backs toward the reader. There is little sense of the intimidation by scary adults; no witch peers threateningly out of the doorway. Instead, the children seem to have stopped dead in their tracks, mesmerized by the scene in front of them. That scene is comprised of large trees with weirdly twisted branches rendered in gray tones and, in the center, a very colorful and invitingly delicious cottage (fig. 23). This basic configuration, the dreary forest as a backdrop for eye candy, not to mention actual sweets, is repeated by several other illustrators (see Marshall; Zelinsky). The tension within the picture gives voice to the ambivalence with which intelligent children would approach such a scene. Particularly after their frightening and demoralizing experiences with their own parents, it would be reasonable for them to ask whether they should trust the vision before them. Another artist who is especially sensitive to the psychological conflicts of childhood is Maurice Sendak, whose Gretel begs for clemency from her tormentor (see Sendak 1: 163). In this poignant image, we see the double bind of the victimized child who is dependent upon and craving love from his/her abuser. Significantly, Sendak bypasses the happy-go-lucky Romantic child, since he "does not subscribe to the credo that childhood is a time of innocence" (Hentoff 325). Instead, he turns to Ludwig Emil Grimm's more solemn image as a model for his own reinterpretation.[23] These changes are significant in that they update the image and subtly redefine the relationships depicted: the cat and dove on the roof, who in Grimm's illustration represented the struggle between good and evil, are replaced by a watchdog who sees all yet does not protect, and who perhaps indicates society's apathy toward children's

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issues. Sendak also retains many elements from the original: Hansel is still imprisoned, Gretel is still weeping, the same cauldron of water is placed in the foreground. For the adult-reader, the constancy of these pictorial elements over one and one-half centuries is historically interesting, but also a very sad reminder of the longevity of child abuse. Again, illustrations such as Sendak's and Nielsen's show sensitivity to the conflicting emotions within the child and seek to express these, whereas the nineteenth-century renditions of the same scene enforce an intergenerational power asymmetry.

Bruno Bettelheim is perhaps the best known psychoanalytic critic of fairy tales, and his *Uses of Enchantment* popularized this approach to the stories. His reading of "Hansel and Gretel" proposes that the siblings were never in any real danger of being abandoned, but that their own developmental stage leads them to entertain the possibility. For him, the witch and stepmother represent a dualistic imagine of the all-encompassing mother who is good and evil at once: she provides nourishment, but she can also withhold it; she nurtures the children, but also has the power to harm them.[24] Bottigheimer points out that this interpretation reinforces notions of feminine evil which are neither appropriate nor even accurate in specific sociohistorical contexts ("Bettelheims Hexe" 295). However inaccurate and implausible Bettelheim's reading may be, it is nevertheless symptomatic of the twentieth century's understanding of "Hansel and Gretel" and has proven inspirational for illustrators. Susanne Suba, for example, draws the stepmother using the iconography of feminine evil: the woman is older, scowling, and ugly, with an oversized, hooked nose and a witch's hood (fig. 24). By depicting the stepmother as a witch, Suba is shifting the source of the tale's central problem from the children to the parents; it is no longer the children who are in need of correction, but their caretakers who are guilty (see also Ross; and Marshall). Similarly, Anthony Browne indicates the stepmother's wicked nature through a clever arrangement of shadows and personal belongings (fig. 25). Extending upward from the head of her shadow is a pointed witch's hat formed by the windowsill and the triangular gap between two badly tattered curtains. Triangular shapes reinforcing the association between witch and stepmother are repeated throughout the illustration in the mouse hole, the church steeple, an object on top of the wardrobe, and yet another mysterious shadow in the mirror. Clearly, the woman is being incriminated. The stepmother, finely coifed and made-up as always, looks down with disappointment upon her sleeping charges. Like the curtains, the room's furnishings are in a very dilapidated condition. Everything is falling apart, that is, everything except the stepmother's shining red and black pumps. Here, and throughout the volume, Browne accuses the woman of vanity, self-interest, and egotism, qualities which not only render her incapable of fulfilling parental duties satisfactorily, but which also make her resentful

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of the demands children place on her. The father, by contrast, expresses love and warmth toward the youngsters, as indicated through the cozy bathrobe, comfortably hanging on the wall. Again, twentieth-century illustrators have embraced the psychoanalytic reading of tales, but have done so with a much different emphasis than Bettelheim. Using a psychologically informed approach, Browne exonerates the young and dissects the stepmother's emotional make-up in order to expose the real root of the children's troubles—it is not the children who are at fault, but instead, a self-centered, uncaring parent.

As the twentieth century progresses, a number of significant changes occur in the production of picture books, first and foremost of which is the increase in the number of pictures. Whereas throughout most of the nineteenth century each tale was adorned with a small number of images, now each page consists primarily of illustration and the text plays second fiddle to the work of the artist. As pictures become more dominant and more numerous, they also become more significant carriers of meaning and vehicles for reinterpreting the tale. For example, nineteenth-century illustrators emphasized scenes of Hansel and Gretel's weakness, such as the confrontation with the wicked witch or the children abandoned in the forest. While these scenes are still popular with contemporary illustrators, they are typically only two out of twenty or more illustrations, instead of the only ones, and hence the relative weight given these moments of weakness is diminished. Browne's incrimination scene, for example, is not suggested by the text. Like Browne, other illustrators use the additional space which the modern book industry affords them, to retell the story, to de-emphasize scenes of the children's weakness and to turn this tale of abuse into one of self-empowerment. Instead of a passive, captured Hansel, for example, Susan Jeffers shows young readers a boy who actively resists the witch's attempt to incarcerate him (see Jeffers n.p.). In her rendition of the witch's murder, Lisbeth Zwerger appreciates Gretel's strength and shows us her active struggle (see Zwerger n.p.). Jeffers, Zwerger, and others (see Ross; and Zelinsky) perform disruptive readings which inject present-day sensibilities into stories from the past, thus transforming "canonical texts into tales that empower and entertain children" (Tatar, *Off with Their Heads* 237).

Of course, not all illustrators attempt to correct an iconographic tradition which features pediatric passivity and female evil, and in fact many of the illustrations discussed here do equate the mother with the witch. Printing trends show an even more powerful nostalgic longing for this tradition. A spate of fairly recent publications suggests that many adults find the restrictive attitudes of the 1800s in some way attractive. The Green Tiger Press publishes a series of tales illustrated with works from its collection of old children's books and describes the series as an "elegant showcase for the works of past masters" (Edens, front inside jacket). Though the illustrations themselves are

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beautiful, the way in which they emphasize adult mastery of children is suspect. Illustrations by Paul Hey were reprinted in 1989 by Thienemann, Pietsch's work was reissued in an Insel edition of the *Kleine Ausgabe* (1985), the graphic art of Hosemann appears in both American (Owens) and German editions, Richter's illustrations are readily available in collections of both Bechstein's and Grimms' tales, and Ludwig Emil Grimm's seven original illustrations were reprinted in 1982 (Gerstner, *Grimms Märchen*). With the exception of the last title mentioned, these books are not marketed for the scholarly community, and most buyers are probably attracted to them by a blind reverence for the past and nostalgia for childhood innocence; but do they realize what else they are buying into? Collectively, these illustrations stress patriarchy, misogyny, prohibition on sweets, and passivity.

Creators of children's culture cater not only to the nostalgia of postmodern shoppers, but also to their belief in children's literature as a didactic tool. The children's television program *Barney* uses the basic structure of "Hansel and Gretel" as a jumping off point for teaching young viewers about the importance of dental hygiene and the superiority of healthy snacks, such as apples, over candy. An illustration by Linda Medley takes the tale in a different direction by prominently featuring a broken window pane (Medley 32). The specifics may have been altered, but the tendency to reinterpret "Hansel and Gretel" as a cautionary tale has not changed since the nineteenth century. Now, as in the past, the more troubling issues raised by the tale are elided and the pedagogical agenda of the custodians of childhood take center stage.

Conclusion

Although "Hansel and Gretel" is a tale of violence against children, in illustrations from both centuries, this violence is rationalized, evaded, or simply ignored. The dominant images from the nineteenth century use this story to promote a Romantic image of the ideal child which was popular with the bourgeoisie. As this study has shown, this was by no means a monolithic tradition. In whatever era we look, there is no single, homogenous portrayal of childhood, but instead a great variety of complementary and competing views. In order to clearly understand how childhood was configured in a given historical context, it is important to investigate the tensions and contradictions which arise when competing interpretations of the child are played off of one another. For example, the dominant image of the Romantic child coexisted with an oppressive didactic agenda promoting passivity and submission vis-à-vis adults, the reduction of sugar intake, and patriarchal gender roles for boys and girls. While the image of the Romantic child found resonance among the more modest social groups, it was also called into question by artists who were sensitive to issues of class. Through their illustrations, Stölzle addresses issues

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of child labor in the lower classes, and Busch exposes corporal punishment practices used amongst the petite bourgeoisie. In a volume produced for families of leisure, Neureuther illustrates children as adornment.

In the twentieth century, the configuration of differing versions of childhood is more complex, but in general, we see a great nostalgia for nineteenth-century images of children. This antiquarian longing can be contrasted with contemporary reworkings of tales which advocate the children's viewpoint and visualize self-empowerment on the part of children. How can we understand this contradiction? Are adults, who on the one hand welcome the autonomy and independence of today's youngsters, also threatened by it? Is this the reason the passive, babylike children of bygone years hold such sway over our imaginations? Do these older images speak to our desires as adults to protect our children from the many dangers lurking in the world? Does the misogyny represented in these images reassure us, even as gender roles are undergoing momentous change, or does it reinforce the conservative forces in cultural production?

While the complexities of adult attitudes toward children can be teased out of contradictions within illustrations and publication trends, understanding the child's reaction to these rich images is more difficult. As Tatar points out, "Adults . . . have almost exclusive control over the public production of words and images for children" ("Is Anybody Out There" 276). She suggests that as adults who read aloud to children, we should listen to the voice of the child, since this voice "can often give us a judicious second opinion about the behavior of the child within the book" (282). Similarly, Donald Haase argues that by listening to children's responses to fairy tales "we can learn a great deal about how fairy tales generate meaning and function in contemporary society" ("Response and Responsibility" 239). Acknowledging the control adult scholars, editors, and publishers exercise over the fairy tale, Haase maintains that the "scholar's burden of responsibility lies in reconstructing the meaning of a fairy tale not only by attending to the voices that speak through it, but also by acknowledging the diverse voices that speak in response to it" (244).

This is a most wholesome approach, and one to be advocated, but children also have ways of inscribing their views into the books themselves. For example, Jeffers's illustration, in which Hansel resists the witch with all his soul and all his might, was filthy with layer upon layer of finger prints in the volume I inspected in the Cambridge Public Library. Could these illustrations of "Hansel and Gretel" be among children's favorites? Yet another edition illustrates the Grimms' tales with paintings by children from around the globe. The painting for "Hansel and Gretel" shows only the witch, no children. The young artist was fascinated by this figure, yet renders her as a nonhuman, with green lips and hair as if to indicate the horror she inspires (*Grimm's Fairy Tales* [1968]).

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Let us turn to yet another volume, which has not been checked out of Harvard University's Widener Library since 1935. In spite of the obvious disinterest adults have taken in this small book, some child found it very compelling. The scene where the witch first confronts the children is rendered in a style typical of nineteenth-century iconography emphasizing the children's submission and intimidation (fig. 26). Seized with animosity toward the witch, a child-reader scratched out her face, and enacted his/her uncomplicated desire to delete her. While children do not leave behind reading notes or glosses, they do paint their own illustrations of familiar tales and they do leave physical traces of their reading in the books they touch. These traces give us inklings as to how children might react to the "behavior of the child within the book," but perhaps they also give us more important insights into the behavior of the adult within the book. The traces left by children indicate not only the child's interest in strength and self-defense, but also his/her condemnation of the child-abuser.

Notes

1. Benjamin, "Alte Kinderbücher" 44. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.
2. Johann Peter Lyser (1803–70) was a popular illustrator of children's books such as *De swienegel* (1853), edited by Schröder, and *Abendländische Tausend und eine Nacht* (1838–39).
3. Pedagogical concerns have always played a role in illustrated children's literature. The first European illustrated book designed exclusively for children (*Orbis pictus,* Nuremberg, 1658) was written by Johannes Amos Comenius, a teacher who intended to improve children's education through his work (Hürlimann 127–32).
4. For in-depth information on the past and present reception of the Grimms' tales, see Haase, *The Reception of Grimms' Fairy Tales.*
5. See Gerstner, *Grimms Märchen;* Ries, "Zu den Illustrationen"; and Weber-Kellermann.
6. The earlier decades of this century, which produced works such as *Alte vergessene Kinderbücher* by Hobrecker and *Alte Deutsche Kinderbücher* by Rümann, demonstrate some scholarly interest in book illustration. This trend waned in the word-based criticism of scholars such as Emil Staiger, Wolfgang Kayser, and Benno von Wiese, but is gaining new ground. Weinrebe's comprehensive work on postwar illustrations of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* was published in 1987.
7. Bang 10. This attitude has since changed. Gerstner calls German illustrators "all eminent artists" ("Deutsche Künstler" 59). Weinrebe points out that after the mid 70s, illustrators became more ambitious and developed individual signatures which boosted market value, showing that the prestige of the illustrator has a positive impact on the price of a children's book (201).
8. "If the artist can never select more than a single moment out of nature, which is always changing, and if the painter in particular only uses a single perspective on this single moment; . . . then surely this single moment can not be chosen productively enough" (Lessing 25).
9. Arnim was perhaps not entirely selfless in making this suggestion, for he often felt

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compelled to offer financial gifts to Jacob and Wilhelm, who seem to have been hopelessly inept businessmen.

10. The seven tales illustrated were: "The Virgin Mary's Child," "The Goose Girl," "Hansel and Gretel," "Snow White," "Cinderella," "Little Red Cap," and "Brier Rose."
11. Böhm-Korff (170) quotes Wilhelm's comments to his brother: "The old witch must be hunched over standing in front of the shed and feeling the bone that Hansel sticks out instead of a finger to see if he's fat enough; then we'd notice immediately what her plans were. Evening would be the best time. The little sister has water which is reflecting the light. On top of the shed above Hansel sits a white dove. On the roof over the witch, however, a black cat readies itself, as if it wanted to pounce on the little dove and catch it. In the background: spruce trees with the moon shining through. Near the witch's house: poisonous herbs, hemlock, thistles, overgrown. It need not be a farm house, it could have an arched doorway and a gothic glass window."
12. Others who draw the forest in this manner include: Hosemann; Geißler and Venus; Stölzle; Skarbina, and an illustration in Lausch's edition of tales. See also the 1990 Green Tiger Press edition of "Hansel and Gretel" (Edens), which collects work of many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century illustrators.
13. Wilhelm Grimm also subscribed to this nostalgic version of childhood, for he claimed that he knew of no better illustrations for the fairy tales than Pocci's (Ries, "Märchen" 82).
14. Richter was not the first to render Bechstein's tales into visual art. The first illustrations for this collection, completed by Schurig in 1846, were considered too dry, formal and monumental to attract child-readers. After appearing in an 1846 printing of Bechstein's tales, Schurig's work was quickly dropped and replaced, in the 1853 edition, by Richter's. Interestingly, this version was hailed as the "first illustrated edition," as if Schurig had never existed (Ries, "Illustrationen" 576–77).
15. Other artists who replicated Schurig's configuration of characters include: Offterdinger; Brau[n]er; and Tenggren.
16. See also: Ludwig Emil Grimm; Richter; Pietsch; Offterdinger; Stölzle; Vogeler (1900, reproduced in Bang, pt. 2, 64); Soper; P. V. Mohn et al. in Bechstein's *Die schönsten Märchen;* Sendak; and others. Three anonymous illustrations—in Lausch; Paull 55; and *Kleiner Märchenschatz*—also exemplify this trend.
17. Steig 266. This general attitude, however banal, does seem to anticipate Bettelheim's more troubling psychological reading of the tale. He claims that the siblings need to learn to give up their "unrestrained . . . gluttony" (161), to relinquish their oral greed and dependence on their mother and become independent, resourceful individuals.
18. Bottigheimer ("From Gold to Guilt") suggests that the misogynistic strain found in the tales represents their lower class origins, and not the actual reality of the Grimms' own class. She further charts a shift in popular culture at the end of the nineteenth century away from the bourgeois values which had dominated since the 1700s toward ideas espoused by the lower classes. This proletarization of culture brought with it increasingly frequent representations of misogyny (Bottigheimer, "Goose Girl" and "Bechstein"). This certainly helps to explain the success of Hosemann's illustrations in the twentieth century, but the misogynistic stereotypes represented here also find strong resonances in illustrations intended for *gute Kinderstuben.*
19. Interestingly, Richter produced another print entitled "Beiß mal ab, Hänsl," in-

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cluded in *Neuer Strauß Für's Haus.* Here, two children, presumably Gretel and her much younger brother Hansel, are standing alone in the forest while the girl feeds the boy a piece of bread. This picture reworks the basic ingredients of the fairy tale into a scene in which a preadolescent girl is responsible for the care of a younger male sibling. Illustrators have clearly interpreted "Hansel and Gretel" as a pedagogical tale supporting a patriarchal family structure, and contemporary scholars also claim that the text was intended to be read in this way. Kreis sees the tale as an enactment of socialization strategies in the peasant classes, in which women were exploited for their labor and men for their muscle and sexuality (44–45). Schwarzer suggests that the witch herself was a pedagogical character, since she supplied a negative example to young women who were just learning about nineteenth-century motherhood ideals (174–77).

20. These dates seem odd, for Stölzle's death anticipates the publication of his work by thirteen years (information from Probst 76).
21. Stölzle's work is not unique, for a very similar illustration appears in the *Kleiner Märchenschatz,* presumably published in the early 1900s.
22. Zipes explains that artists of the Weimar Republic rediscovered the potential for social critique lying dormant in the Grimms' work and often rewrote the tales from a Socialist perspective (*Art of Subversion* 138). Lyser was also famed for the social critique he incorporated into his tales and illustrations (Bang 66; Gerstner, "Deutsche Künstler" 38).
23. See also Tatar's article "Wilhelm Grimm/Maurice Sendak."
24. Bettelheim 159. Tatar has pointed out that this entire interpretation reveals much more about parental fantasies than it does about childhood psychology (*Off with Their Heads* 1–16). Just imagine, one day children, whom mother and father mistreated because of the financial claims they placed on household resources, return home with enormous riches and allow all to live happily ever after.

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